

PC Ecuador Informativo

OFFICIAL MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM PEACE CORPS ECUADOR

Decade of 2020s – Changes, Adaptation and Hope

On the morning of January 14, 2022 the OMN 123 cohort, arrived full of excitement and expectations; they started their 10-week TEFL training at the Training Center located in Monteserrín, Quito. Volunteers lived with their host families in Tumbaco y Nayon.

At the same time the spread of a new illness caused by an unknown virus from the Chinese city of Wuhan attracted attention of media and people around the world.



OMN 123 Trainees during the preparation of a meal in a Kichwa community

The Evacuation



Michael A. Donald, country director, guided the evacuation process

Life around the world was put on hold because of the health emergency caused by the COVID 19 pandemic.

All of a sudden, Trainees and Volunteers were brought together on March 16, 2020 in Quito and Guayaquil hotels. With a mix of sadness, uncertainty and astonishment they left everything behind. Upon arrival they commented: "I didn't have time to say good bye to my host family or to my friends," "I was unable to turn in the house keys to the landlord," "I just had signed the new lease contract with the landlord." On next day, March 17, 2020, the 173 Volunteers were evacuated from Guayaquil in two airplanes, they landed in Miami and from there each PCV went on to their home of record.

Work during the pandemic

Without PCTs and PCVs in country, Peace Corps staff led by Michael Donald, began working remotely, to develop projects for Trainees, Volunteers and staff. Additionally, programs like Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Youth and Families in Development and Health and Wellbeing signed agreements with a number of Ecuadorian organizations to keep active relationships between Peace Corps and the Ecuadorian community. It was time to rethink and propose new initiatives such as the Virtual Service Pilot Program, an opportunity to continue to serve the Ecuadorian people through collaborations with RPCVs who provide virtual workshops to TEFL and Youth and Families in Development host country partners.



Staff participated in different trainings to be prepared before the return of Volunteers to service.



The current projects are: Youth and Families Development, Health and Wellbeing and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

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The Return of Volunteers



ECUA 125 Trainees a day after their arrival

More than two years went by from evacuation to the return of the Trainees. It was a time to adapt to the new worldwide reality and it also allowed for Peace Corps to do some changes such as updating the name of Omnibus to “Ecua” to identifying the new cohorts of Trainees for more of an Ecuador identity.

After receiving Washington approval, Ecua 125 was formed by 16 TEFL Trainees, who arrived in Quito on May 12, 2022.



USA Ambassador visited the training center during the first weeks of the group

Service during the pandemic

A Volunteer connected to the country

Paulina Prasad was a Volunteer in Ecuador from 2019 until 2020 when her service was cut short because of the global evacuation of Volunteers during the COVID 19 pandemic. In July 2021, she joined the Virtual Service Pilot Project. Paulina is grateful to Ecuador and has enjoyed the opportunity to continue serving in this country.

Read the full story [here](#)

